A Home That Breathes: Why I Choose Real Over Artificial

LIFESTYLE

A reflection on the value of living things in our homes—and why authenticity matters in the spaces we create.

AUTHOR
Rohit Farmer

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I personally prefer not to have artificial flowers or plants at home. I don’t mind them in offices or commercial spaces, since the purpose and feel of décor there is very different from a home environment. At home, I like having live plants and flowers because they follow a natural cycle of growth, change, and eventual decay—something that feels meaningful and alive.

Caring for real plants also gives me a sense of responsibility and presence. Nurturing them shows mindfulness toward my surroundings and reflects my desire to create a space that grows and evolves with me. Artificial plants, on the other hand, tend to remain unchanged in a corner for years. They gather dust but never truly “live” or “grow,” and for me, that doesn’t add anything to the home.

The same goes for candles. I prefer real wax candles because they burn, change, and finish in a way that feels natural and warm. Battery-operated candles, while convenient, don’t offer the same sense of authenticity. They don’t emit warmth or fragrance, and they stay the same size until the battery dies—they never transform in the way real candles do.

For me, a home is a place where things should have life, warmth, and meaning. If someone doesn’t have the time or desire to care for plants, I feel it’s better to leave that space empty rather than filling it with artificial alternatives that don’t grow, change, or contribute to one’s life. An unused corner is perfectly fine until you find something you’re genuinely passionate about—something that can evolve with you, rather than simply sit there unchanged.

Edit: The day after Thanksgiving, we visited one of our family friends for dinner, and they had their fireplace going with a real wood fire. I’ve always loved wood fires—whether while camping or in a cozy home fireplace. Some of our friends have electric or digital fireplaces, and while they can be convenient, they don’t offer the same warmth, smell, or simple pleasure of real burning wood.

Just like with plants and candles, I feel that artificial fireplaces don’t bring the same sense of authenticity to a home. And if maintaining a real fireplace is too difficult, I personally think it’s better not to have one at all than to replace it with an imitation that doesn’t offer the same experience.

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